

VZCZCXRO0146  
OO RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHRN  
DE RUEH KI #0321/01 0960643  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
O 060643Z APR 09  
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
TO RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE 2943  
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9422  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE  
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 0124  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE  
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK IMMEDIATE  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000321

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/03/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [SOCI](#) [MNUC](#) [BE](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: DCM AND DATT MEET WITH BELGIAN COUNTERPARTS TO  
DISCUSS INCREASED COOPERATION ON MILITARY REFORM

REF: A. (A) KINSHASA 285  
[1](#)B. (B) USDEL SECTO 3202341  
[1](#)C. (C) BRUSSELS 455

Classified By: Ambassador William J. Garvelink for reasons  
1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: Deputy Chief of Mission and Defense  
Attache met March 31 with Belgian counterparts to discuss  
possible U.S.-Belgian cooperation on Security Sector Reform  
(SSR) as mentioned ref (A). Belgians were receptive to idea  
of working more closely with the U.S. to advance military  
aspects of the SSR agenda. They also agreed to join DCM and  
DATT in organizing, for the latter half of April, the first  
of a monthly series of meetings of DCM's and DATT's from  
major donor countries, including South Africa, Angola and  
China, that would hopefully become a mechanism to coordinate  
donor efforts and maintain focus on SSR objectives. We would  
appreciate Washington's (DOS and DOD) and AFRICOM's views on  
how to reinforce this initiative in other arenas (e.g.,  
military-to-military gatherings under the aegis of AFRICOM;  
the Great Lakes Support Group; etc.). End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Per ref (A) DCM and DATT met with their Belgian  
counterparts, Charles Delogne and Col. Frank Werbrouk,  
respectively, to discuss increased U.S.-Belgian cooperation  
in the DRC on Security Sector Reform, specifically in the  
area of military reform. DCM began by referring to recent  
meetings in Kinshasa between the U.S. and EU mission (ref A)  
on March 18; in Brussels between Secretary Clinton and  
Foreign Minister DeGucht (ref B) on March 6; and also in  
Brussels between AFRICOM's DCMA Yates and representatives of  
Belgian civil society and parliament (ref C) on March 12.  
Delogne and Werbrouk stated that they were only vaguely aware  
of these meetings.

[1](#)3. (C) The Belgians' initial reaction to the idea of working  
more closely together was positive. After DATT reviewed  
ongoing U.S. efforts to establish a U.S. program to train a  
Congolese Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) in Kisangani, Werbrouk  
noted that the U.S. had a "growing role" to play in helping  
the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) to make important reforms.  
In discussing the kinds of military cooperation to be  
considered he rejected the notion of "new projects" -- there  
were plenty of old projects. Instead, he called for regular  
consultation, and a willingness to strengthen each country's  
ongoing programs. He enthusiastically offered to work with

senior Belgian military officials to see if the Belgians' C-130 aircraft, used on a permanent basis to assist the Belgians with their own military programs, could also be used to help the U.S. with logistical support to the RRF trainers in Kisangani. He made clear, however, that he could not guarantee that the C-130 would be made available. He also suggested imbedding one or more Belgian trainers with the U.S. training team and reviving the idea of imbedding an American in theirs, ideas which we would welcome.

¶4. (C) DCM Delogne was less enthusiastic than his counterpart. In expressing (mild) support for the idea, he noted that Belgium was greatly overextended in the DRC in almost all areas of cooperation it was working on. He lamented that the Congolese expected too much of Belgium and that his country simply did not have the resources to successfully undertake so many projects. He also called for a lower Belgian profile in the Congo. If the Americans could fill the breach as Belgium's profile diminished somewhat, he seemed to imply, that would be a good thing. (Note: Delogne is an old DRC hand and is clearly Congo-fatigued. He rotates out this summer after four years in Kinshasa in what has been a tumultuous time in DRC-Belgian relations. His mind was clearly elsewhere during the conversation and he mentioned that by Friday he would have word on his next assignment. End note.)

¶5. (C) U.S. DCM stated that one idea that might be tried to intensify donor cooperation and coordination would be regular meetings between donors at the DCM and DATT level to ensure

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political buy in as well as military expertise. He asked Belgians for their views on who should be invited to these meetings, noting that we were favorably disposed to inviting not just the EU, but also the other big three non-Western players: South Africa, Angola, and China. Our interlocutors said they supported the idea of such meetings and agreed fully that Angola, South Africa and China should be invited. They also agreed to help us organize the first meeting, which could be held the third or fourth week of April. To hold the meeting sooner, all concurred, would risk a low turn-out as many diplomats in Kinshasa will leave post for the Easter holidays. We also agreed to get together again before the first meeting to put together an agenda for the first DCM/DATT military assistance donors meeting. Agenda items might include: developing a comprehensive catalogue of who is doing what; the utility of the GDRC's current plan ("feuille de route") for SSR as a working document for military reform; how best to engage with the GDRC, particularly the MOD and the FARDC on military reform; international community support for aspects of SSR outside the strict purview of military issues (e.g., police reform and strengthening the judiciary).

¶6. (C) Comment: The Belgians' reaction to our opening remarks suggests that their superiors in Brussels had not instructed them to discuss increased cooperation with us. That notwithstanding, they appear to be willing to go along with our initiative. The Belgians are sending a delegation from their Ministry of Defense to AFRICOM in mid-April to discuss their experiences in the area of SSR in the DRC, and our defense attache plans on attending this meeting. That the Belgians believe that the U.S. has a "growing role" to play in DRC-donor cooperation on military reform is a sign that Europeans and, hopefully, others, will join with us in trying to revive the military reform process and move it forward. We would appreciate Washington's (DOS and DOD) and AFRICOM's views on how to reinforce this initiative in other arenas (e.g., military-to-military gatherings under the aegis of AFRICOM; the Great Lakes Support Group; etc.). End comment.  
GARVELINK